

170th Group provides support to the 55th Wing by training airmen conducting worldwide missions for our Nation.

In addition, they have become a premier example of total force integration between the Active Duty Air Force and the Air National Guard. In my 30 years in the Air Force, this is the best Active Duty and National Guard relationship that I have seen. I think it is the best in the Nation.

Since September 11, the Nebraska National Guard has deployed over 10,000 soldiers and airmen. The guardsmen not only provide assistance to the United States, but throughout the world. There are dozens of Nebraska soldiers deployed to Guantanamo Bay supporting detainee operations. Next year, the Nebraska Air National Guard will deploy to key locations in the Pacific and Middle East.

Most recently, members of the Nebraska National Guard deployed to Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands to assist with the hurricane relief efforts.

The Nebraska National Guard rescued 461 people and 22 pets, and they served 6,000 pounds of bottled water, 3,000 pounds of food, and 1,000 pounds of medical supplies to the people of Texas.

In response to Hurricane Irma, 102 Guard members were in Florida providing an aviation task force for support operations. Currently, there are 58 soldiers and airmen providing support to the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. These efforts range from rescuing people to cleaning up St. Croix's Ricardo Richards Elementary School.

The Nebraska National Guard's value to Nebraskans and Americans across the Nation cannot be understated. Our soldiers and airmen risk their lives to save our neighbors in need.

I thank the Nebraska National Guard for their service to the Nation and Nebraska. All Nebraskans are proud of their service.

#### ADDRESSING THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN PUERTO RICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ESPAILLAT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, marking the 48th day since Hurricane Maria made direct landfall on the island of Puerto Rico.

Wreaking havoc for over 3.4 million American citizens living on the island, this administration's response has been beyond atrocious. I witnessed it myself a couple of weeks ago, and so did a group of 50 registered nurses from across the country who volunteered for a two-week disaster relief fund and mission.

What these courageous women described upon returning was not at all reassuring. The lack of efficient action has led to deadly conditions and consequences: lack of food, water, medi-

cine, proper healthcare services, houses with roofs blown off or infested with black mold, and leptospirosis outbreaks across the island.

Laura Maceri, a registered nurse, said: "It's hell there. The people have nothing, yet they are the first to offer you the shirt off their back."

Another nurse, Hau Yau, expressed: "We couldn't believe this is part of the United States. We did home visits in low-income communities with the public health liaisons there who identified those in need, and helped them do basic blood pressure checks, blood sugar checks, to refill their medicine, et cetera. They have already had chronic diseases going on, and now their environment is full of hazardous materials, and the sanitation is very, very poor."

From another nurse, Erin Carrera: "Spent the day in Rio Grande, a hard-hit area right outside of San Juan. No power or water here since Maria. We set up a clinic at the FEMA site for the first time here. People lined up blocks since 10 p.m. last night. But FEMA was only handing out papers—papers, which need to be filled out in order that they may receive some reimbursement eventually. Each person received a small bottle of water, a mini bag of Cheez-It and a little pack of vanilla cookies. Outrageous. We were able to provide care to some, not nearly enough, but one small contribution to this tragedy today."

Another nurse said: "Today we went to a town called Barranquitas. They had almost no water or food there. They were desperate. They are relying on rainwater. One million chickens died during the storm and are now decomposed and causing people to get sick. Overwhelming is the only thing I can say to describe it."

Mr. Speaker, I stand with these nurses in their demands to address the humanitarian crisis on the island of Puerto Rico. This administration must respond immediately.

We need to waive FEMA's cost-sharing requirements in Puerto Rico. Yesterday, Representative GUTIERREZ and I introduced the WEPA legislation—the Waiver of Emergency Payments Act—that chooses and aims to do exactly that.

□ 1030

#### PROPER NUTRITION FOR EVERYONE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ADERHOLT). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about nutrition and, more specifically, malnutrition. My family and I have traveled across the country doing mission work, from the poorest country in this Western Hemisphere, Haiti; to the plains of Kenya; across Mexico; and throughout Central America.

On those trips, I went there as a physician thinking that I could help peo-

ple, but what I quickly discovered was that, despite how many antibiotics or bottles of IV fluids that I had, without proper nutrition, without proper water and sewage treatment, I was simply running into a headwind in a war that I could never win.

Unfortunately, across the globe, there are almost 1 billion people who suffer from malnutrition, and it is a problem that doesn't exist just across the world. It also exists in my own district, in my own communities. We think that actually about 12 percent of the United States households have food insecurity issues, and, in households with children, the number goes up to 16 percent of food insecurity issues.

It would be my opinion, without this hierarchy of needs being met, the hierarchy of the needs of proper water, proper sewage, and proper nutrition, that you will never have a healthy community. Without a healthy community, you will never see economic growth.

This battle against malnutrition is long running. In recent years, many in the hunger community have recognized the value of fighting malnutrition in targeted ways. One way was popularized by Roger Thurow in his book, "The First 1,000 Days: A Crucial Time for Mothers and Children—And the World."

Research shows that good nutrition actually begins before conception. Good nutrition starts before conception, continues throughout the woman's pregnancy, and, especially, those first 2 years after a child's birth are very important.

As a practicing obstetrician for 25 years, I see over and over the impact of proper nutrition. Proper nutrition in those first 1,000 days starts with a well-balanced diet and adequate calories. Additionally, we always try to start our prenatal vitamins at least 3 months before conception.

You might ask: Why is that important? What we have found is that if there is adequate folic acid in a woman's body, along with adequate iron, it decreases birth defects, and it decreases premature birth and low birth weights. Specifically, folic acid decreases neural tube defects. So those two vitamins are particularly important that we continue in these diets preconceptually, during the pregnancy, then after for at least the first 2 years.

A child that receives the proper 1,000 days of nutrition has a lower chance of obesity, heart disease, and chronic illnesses. The child is 10 times more likely to overcome serious childhood illnesses and is more likely to fulfill their full God-given potential.

What we know and understand is that the most vulnerable will succumb to viruses, whether it is the elderly or the infants, if they don't have proper nutrition. An investment during this critical time period, these first 1,000 days, not only impacts the development of the child, but results in a higher likelihood of healthiness in generations to